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A FAIRYTALE LIFE

Part **4** of **4**

The story so far...

The Doctor and Amy have traveled to an alien planet designed as a fairytale pleasure world. But the fairytale is long over, and when Amy is kidnapped and taken by the mysterious Serpentines to the Dread Tower, it's up to The Doctor and brave knight Sir Callum to save her. But when they arrive at the Tower, they receive a most unexpected greeting...

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Edited by Denton J. Tipton

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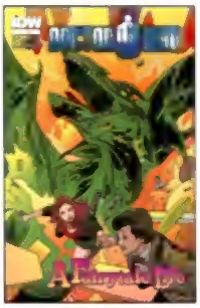

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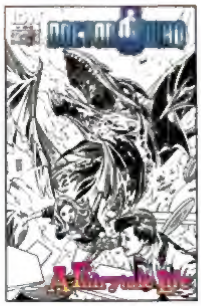

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SIRE, I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
ARE YOU... IN LEAGUE WITH THE LORD OF THE DREAD TOWER?
HE'S NOT IN LEAGUE WITH ANYONE, CALLUM.

THIS ISN'T A DREAD TOWER AT ALL. IT'S THE MAIN BUILDING OF A PLANETARY THEME PARK.
I'M ASSUMING THAT YOU ARE AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL, YOUR HIGHNESS?
SERVICE ENTRANCE
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

AND YOU'VE BEEN AUTHORIZED FOR QUITE SOME TIME, HAVEN'T YOU? JUST OVER 150 YEARS, GIVE OR TAKE?
WHICH MEANS YOU'VE HAD ACCESS TO SOME VERY ADVANCED HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY THAT'S BEEN DENIED TO YOUR SUBJECTS.
SIRE! PLEASE EXPLAIN ALL OF THIS!

CALLUM, I WILL ALLOW YOU TO LEAVE HERE ALIVE, IF YOU SWEAR ON YOUR HONOR NEVER TO SPEAK OF THIS AGAIN.
I CANNOT DO THAT, SIRE. MY DAUGHTER IS HERE.
PLEASE STAND ASIDE AND LET ME GO TO HER.

I AM GENUINELY SORRY IT MUST COME TO THIS. YOU HAVE BEEN A SON TO ME.
BUT I CANNOT TOLERATE A DISOBEDIENT SON.
CLICK

RRRWARRRRR!
CALLUM! FOLLOW ME!
WHIRRRRR
BZZZT
DO YOU THINK I NEED THAT WEAPON TO FEND YOU OFF, CALLUM? I WORK JUST AS WELL WITH A BLADE.
YOU WOULD TURN ON ME? I HAVE BEEN LOYAL TO A FAULT, AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY MY LOYALTY?
WITH DECEPTION AND LIES?!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU ARE NO LONGER MY KING!
CALLUM! THIS WAY!
THAT SHOULD HOLD THE DRAGON FOR A BIT, EH, CALLUM?
CALLUM?

CALLUM! COME ON! YOU'LL BE KILLED!
GO AND RESCUE THE PRISONERS, DOCTOR. MY BUSINESS IS HERE!

I AM SORRY ABOUT THIS, CALLUM. TRULY.
ARRRRRRR!
HEY! OVER HERE!

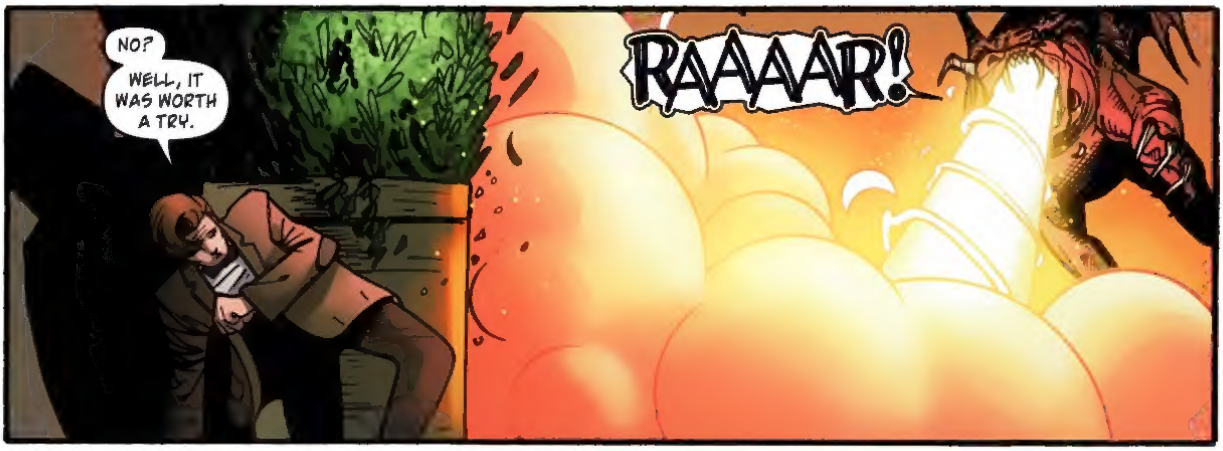
OH, THAT STINGS, DOESN'T IT, MISTER DRAGON? COME ON, THEN!
COME AND GET ME!

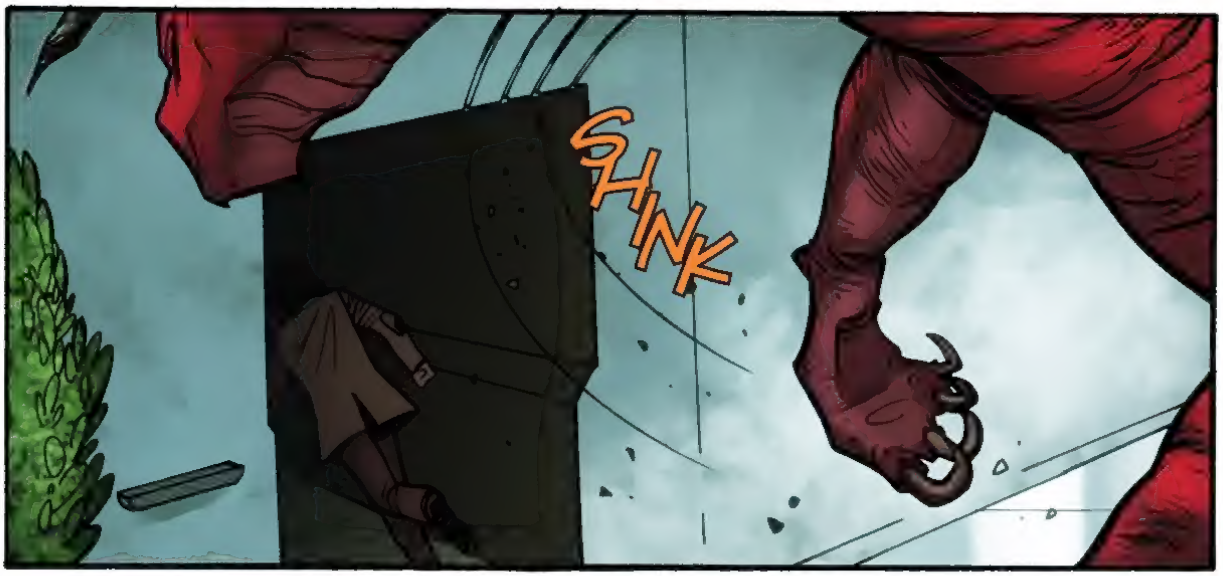
ARRRRRRR!

OH, CRIKEY.

SMASH

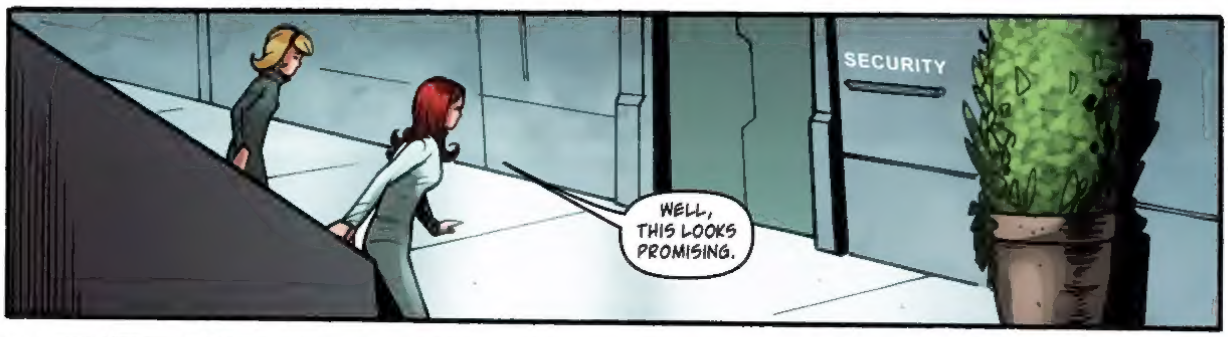
FRIEGHT DOCK
ADMINISTRATION
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE SENTIENT DRAGONS, THE CRAFTY KIND THAT PREFERS A GAME OF RIDDLES, THAT SORT OF THING?
I KNOW SOME BRILLIANT RIDDLES.


NO?
WELL, IT WAS WORTH A TRY.
RAAAAR!


SHINK

UGH. THIS PLACE IS MASSIVE.
DO THEY NOT HAVE LIFTS IN THE 79TH CENTURY? HAS MANKIND FORGOTTEN HOW TO BUILD A LIFT?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, MISS AMY.
ME NEITHER, KID. I'M A BIT DELIRIOUS, TO BE HONEST.
THE POINT IS, IF WE KEEP GOING DOWNWARD, EVENTUALLY WE SHOULD FIND THE EXIT.
OR THE BASEMENT. HM. MAY HAVE TO RETHINK THIS.


SECURITY
WELL, THIS LOOKS PROMISING.

WHAT IS THAT?
THAT'S A GUN. A REALLY BIG GUN.
POINT THE SHOOTY BIT AT THE BAD GUY, PULL THE TRIGGER, BOOM.

WHY WOULD WE WANT SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
OH, I DON'T KNOW, AURELIA.
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SKULKING AROUND A CASTLE FULL OF MAD TENTACLE MONSTERS AND THOUGHT TO YOURSELF, "OH, I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE THIS HUGE GUN"?

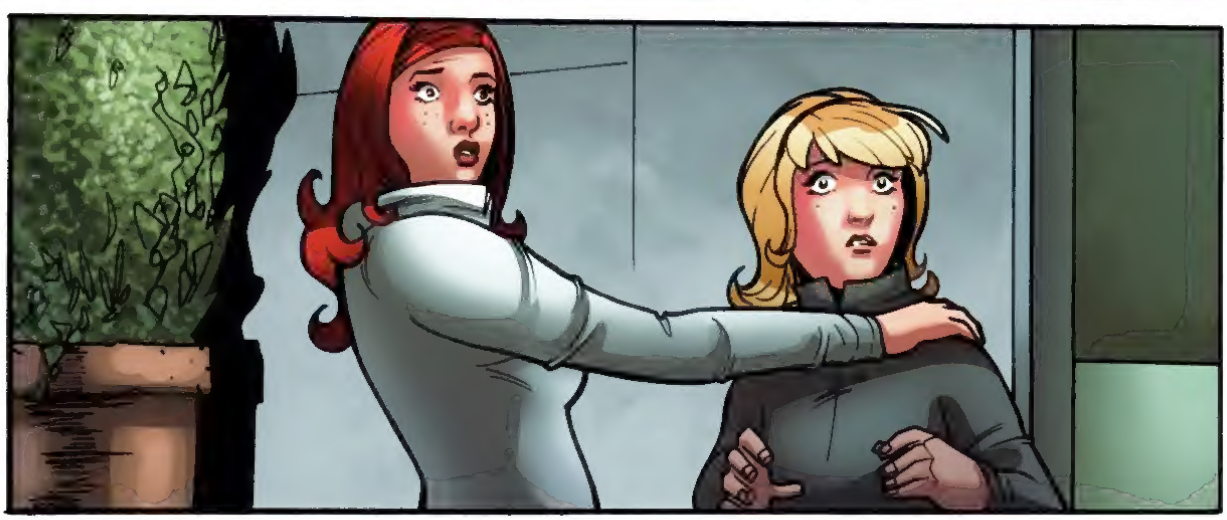
WHICH I AM TOO WEAK TO LIFT.
BRILLIANT.

THOOM
RAAAAR!
WHAT IS THAT?
THAT?

I RECKON THAT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE DOCTOR.

COME ON, KID. THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET INTERESTING!

AMY! LOOK OUT!



RAAAAR!

OOF!
AMY!

HELLO, AMY!
WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME!

MISS AMY? IS THIS YOUR ASSISTANT?
YOUR WHAT?
NEVER MIND.

THAT OUGHT TO HOLD IT FOR A BIT—ALTHOUGH, TO BE FAIR, I'VE ALREADY SAID THAT TWICE IN THE PAST TEN MINUTES...

AMY? HOW ARE YOU HOLDING UP?
WELL, I'M DYING OF A PLAGUE AND ALMOST GOT TOASTED BY A DRAGON JUST NOW. IT'S A LAUGH.

WELL, THE IMPORTANT THING IS YOU'RE SAFE, FOR THE MOMENT ANYWAY.
AND WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS ROOM I'VE DISCOVERED?
EH? EH? QUITE A ROOM, RIGHT?

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT IT?
OH, THIS ISN'T JUST ANY ROOM, AMY. THIS IS A MASTER CONTROL ROOM.
I CAN TURN THINGS ON. I CAN SHUT THINGS DOWN. I CAN ALSO RUN THE GARDEN SPRINKLERS AND ORDER BREAKFAST.
BUT ONE VERY INTERESTING THING I CAN DO IS—
HOLO-IMAGING BOOT SEQUENCE

ALERT. BIOLOGICAL CONTAINMENT PROTOCOLS IN EFFECT. ALERT.
—THIS!
WHAT IS THIS?
COME ON, MAN. HURRY!
19-04-7711 10:22:37

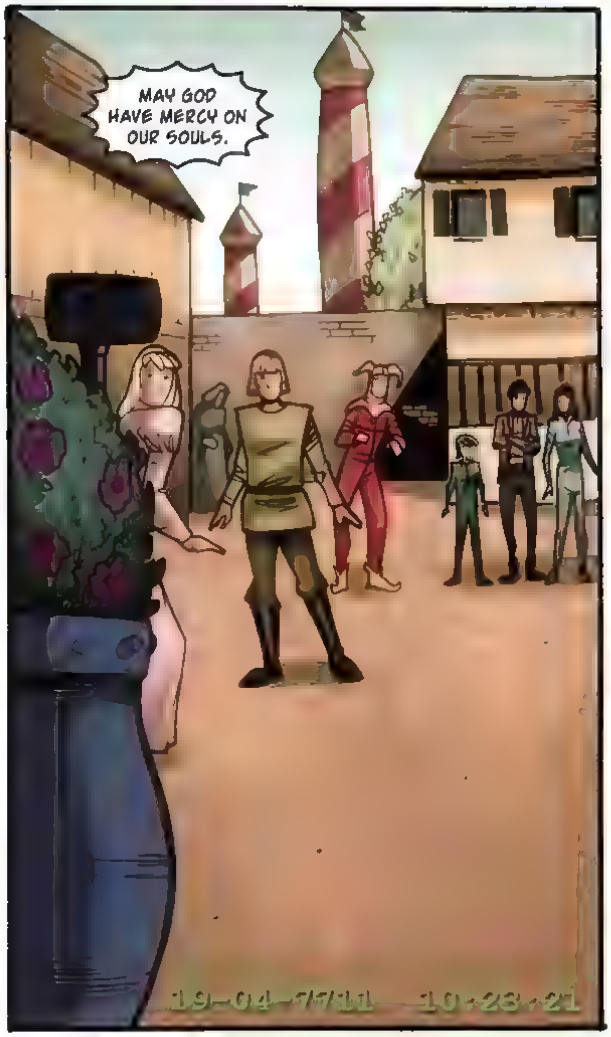
THIS IS THE FINAL ENTRY IN THE IMMERSIVE HOLOGRAPHIC SECURITY FEED. DATED JUST OVER 150 YEARS AGO.
SEE ANYONE YOU RECOGNISE?
THAT'S... THAT'S THE KING!
HERE ARE THE FACULTATIVE ANAEROBE ANTIBIOTICS—IF YOU COULD GIVE ME A HAND WITH THIS, SIR?
19-04-7711 10:22:59

SIR! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THAT'S EVERY VIAL OF VACCINE WE'VE GOT!
19-04-7711 10:23:06

DISTRIBUTING THE VACCINE WOULD RATHER DEFEAT THE PURPOSE OF WHAT I'M TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH HERE.
SIR, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? ARE YOU SAYING YOU CAUSED THIS OUTBREAK? ARE YOU MAD?
19-04-7711 10:23:10

NO. I SIMPLY REPROGRAMMED THE BIOFILTER AT THE SPACEPORT TO STOP SCREENING FOR RECOMBINANT *YERSINIA PESTIS*.
THE SAD PART IS THAT IT ONLY TOOK THREE DAYS FOR AN INFECTED VISITOR TO SHOW UP. A SIGN OF THE TIMES, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?
19-04-7711 10:23:14

ATTENTION ALL STAFF AND VISITORS. THIS IS... THIS IS CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR AETHELRED.
I AM DEEPLY SADDENED TO INFORM YOU THAT IMPERIAL ORDER SH567 REQUIRES ME TO PLACE THIS PLANET UNDER A STATE OF TOTAL QUARANTINE.
I AM EVEN SADDER TO REPORT THAT OUR BACKUP SUPPLIES OF THE TREATMENT HAVE BEEN SABOTAGED.
19-04-7711 10:23:18

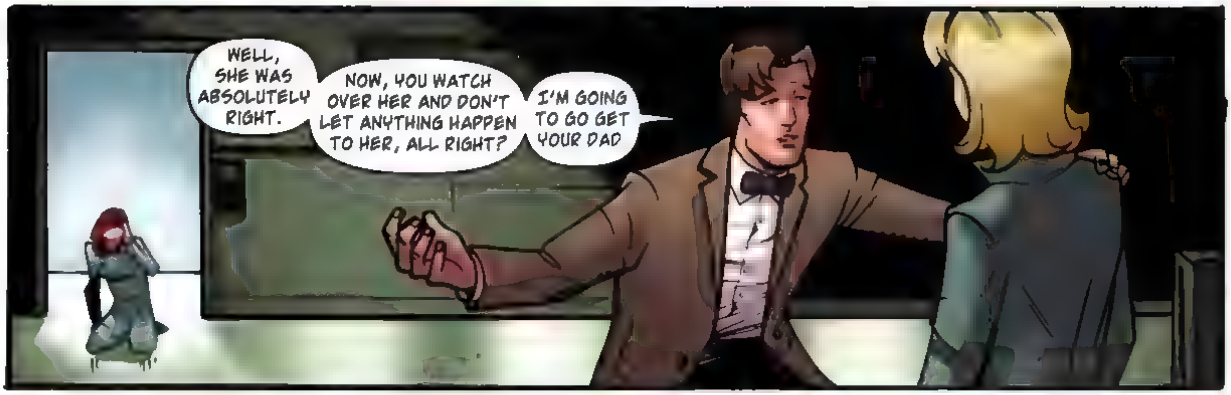

MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON OUR SOULS.
19-04-7711 10:23:21

IT WAS THE KING. HE DID IT ON PURPOSE. HE LET ALL THOSE PEOPLE DIE.
OF *COURSE*. THAT'S HOW HE PULLED IT OFF!
THE PLAGUE KILLS ALL THE ADULTS, BUT IT LEAVES SMALL CHILDREN ALIVE. SO BY THE TIME THEY'RE FULLY GROWN, HE'S MANAGED TO CONVINCE THEM THAT THIS PLACE IS *REAL*.
THE QUESTION IS—*WHY?*

MY DADDY! THAT'S MY DADDY IN THERE!
CALLUM!
I'VE GOT TO GO HELP HIM.

AMY, YOU WAIT HERE. THERE'S A DRAGON OUTSIDE AND I DON'T LIKE YOUR CHANCES RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
OH, NO, I'M JUST FINE. JUST A WEE BIT WOOZY IS ALL.

DID SHE REALLY SAY I WAS HER ASSISTANT?
YES, SIR

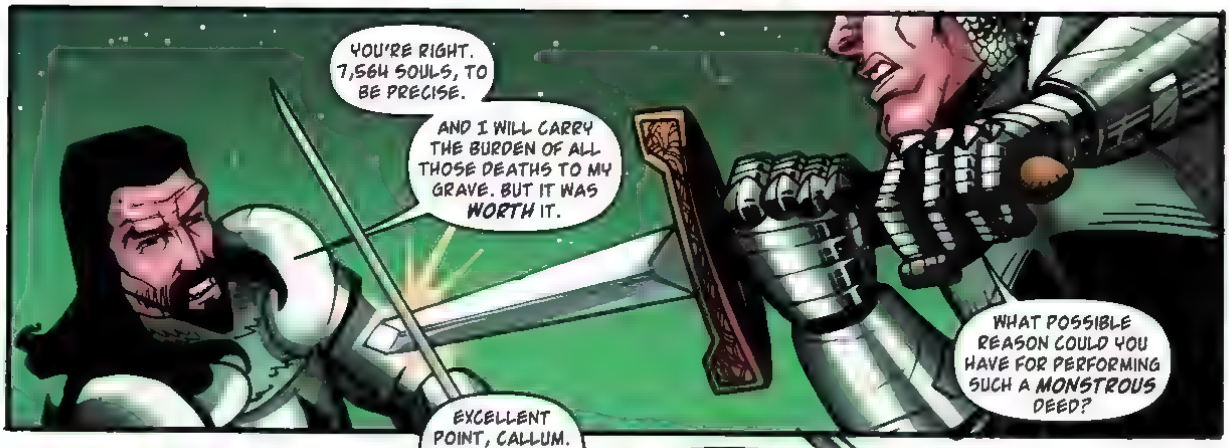

WELL, SHE WAS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.
NOW, YOU WATCH OVER HER AND DON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO HER, ALL RIGHT?
I'M GOING TO GO GET YOUR DAD

DOCTOR, PLEASE BE CAREFUL!
BE—WHAT? I'M ALWAYS CAREFUL.
NOW, THEN. LET'S SEE TO THAT DRAGON AND GET IN THE MIDDLE OF A SWORD FIGHT.

STAND DOWN, SIR CALLUM. WHY WON'T YOU STAND DOWN?
YOU KNOW THAT YOU CANNOT BEST ME. I WAS SWINGING A BLADE FOR A HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE YOU WERE EVEN BORN.
PERHAPS, SIRE, BUT I AM FIGHTING TO PROTECT MY CHILD, WHEREAS YOU ARE ONLY FIGHTING TO PROTECT A LIE.
OH, HELLO!

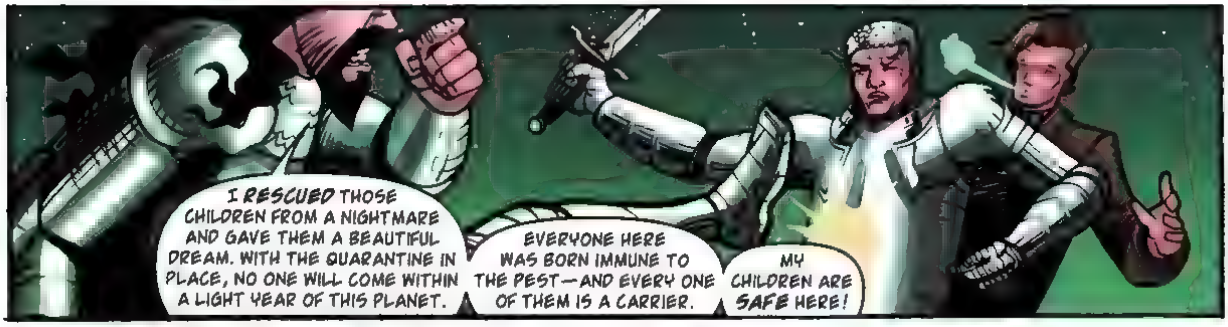
DOCTOR. YOU YET LIVE
OH, NOW. YOU CAN DROP THE MEDIEVAL AFFECTATION NOW, ADMINISTRATOR AETHELRED.
I'VE JUST BEEN REVIEWING YOUR VERY INFORMATIVE HOLOGRAPHIC SECURITY FOOTAGE.

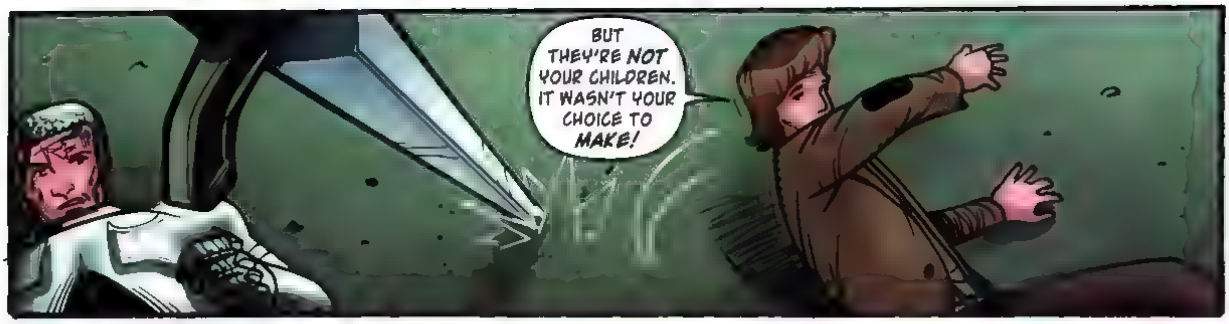
THEN YOU KNOW WHAT I DID. BUT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW IS WHY.
YES, YOU MURDERED EVERYONE ON THE PLANET OVER THE AGE OF TEN. NOT THE SORT OF THING THAT LENDS ITSELF TO AN OBVIOUS EXPLANATION, IS IT?


YOU'RE RIGHT. 7,564 SOULS, TO BE PRECISE.
AND I WILL CARRY THE BURDEN OF ALL THOSE DEATHS TO MY GRAVE. BUT IT WAS WORTH IT.
WHAT POSSIBLE REASON COULD YOU HAVE FOR PERFORMING SUCH A MONSTROUS DEED?

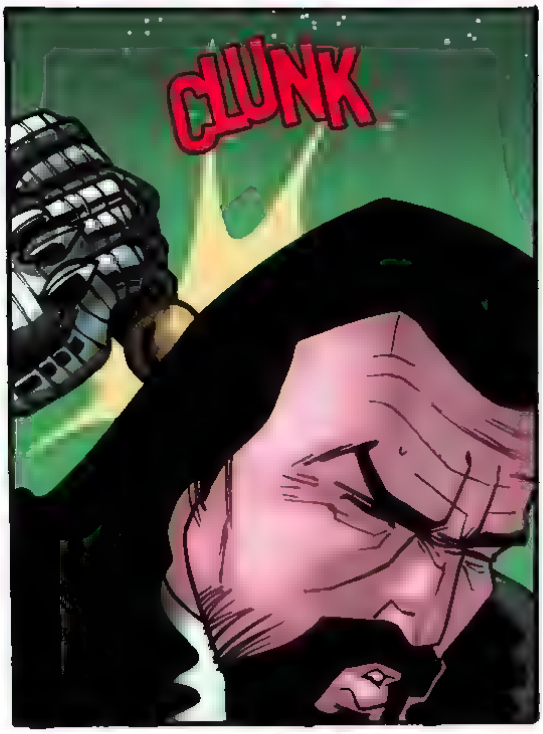
EXCELLENT POINT, CALLUM. THAT'S WHAT I'M WONDERING EXACTLY.
THE EMPIRE HAD GONE UTTERLY MAD. THERE WAS WAR EVERYWHERE. FAMINE. PLAGUES A HUNDRED TIMES WORSE THAN THE PEST.
ALL OF THOSE PEOPLE WERE AS GOOD AS DEAD ANYWAY, MORE OR LESS.

TO LOOK AT ALL OF THOSE CHILDREN DAY AFTER DAY, HAPPY AND CAREFREE, KNOWING THAT IN A FEW YEARS MANY OF THEM WOULD BE DEAD ON SOME DISTANT PLANET...
...SLAUGHTERED BY THE SYCORAX, OR THE DRAHVINS, OR THE SONTARANS. AND FOR WHAT?
I COULDN'T STAND IT ANYMORE!


I RESCUED THOSE CHILDREN FROM A NIGHTMARE AND GAVE THEM A BEAUTIFUL DREAM. WITH THE QUARANTINE IN PLACE, NO ONE WILL COME WITHIN A LIGHT YEAR OF THIS PLANET.
EVERYONE HERE WAS BORN IMMUNE TO THE PEST—AND EVERY ONE OF THEM IS A CARRIER.
MY CHILDREN ARE SAFE HERE!


BUT THEY'RE NOT YOUR CHILDREN. IT WASN'T YOUR CHOICE TO MAKE!

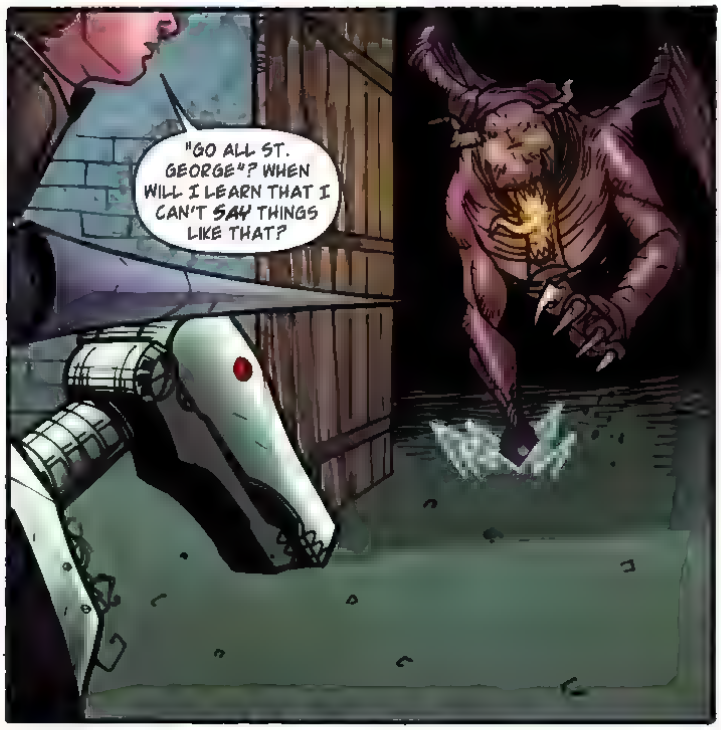
YOU'RE RIGHT, DOCTOR. BUT I MADE IT ANYWAY. AND I SHALL MOST CERTAINLY BE DAMNED FOR IT.
BUT GIVEN THE CHOICE, I WOULD DO IT ALL AGAIN!


CLUNK

ROARRR!
OH, BLIMEY! DO YOU HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO?

DOCTOR, I CAN FIGHT NO LONGER! MY HEART IS BROKEN, AND MY LIMBS ARE WEARY.
DON'T WORRY, CALLUM. HANG ON!
RAAAAAR!

ALL RIGHT, MY TRUSTY STEED. LET'S GO ALL ST. GEORGE ON THIS BEAST!


"GO ALL ST. GEORGE"? WHEN WILL I LEARN THAT I CAN'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT?

GERONIMO!

KA-THOOOM
NOW THAT IS A LANCE!

WHO'S THE DAMSEL NOW, BOYO?

AURELIA!
DADDY!

OH, MY SWEET CHILD. YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!

NO, NO, NO. AMY!
SAY... AURELIA?

LISTEN TO ME, AURELIA—LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY.
WHEN YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY DOWN HERE, DID YOU HAPPEN TO PASS A LITTLE SHOP?

POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

...A TARDIS!

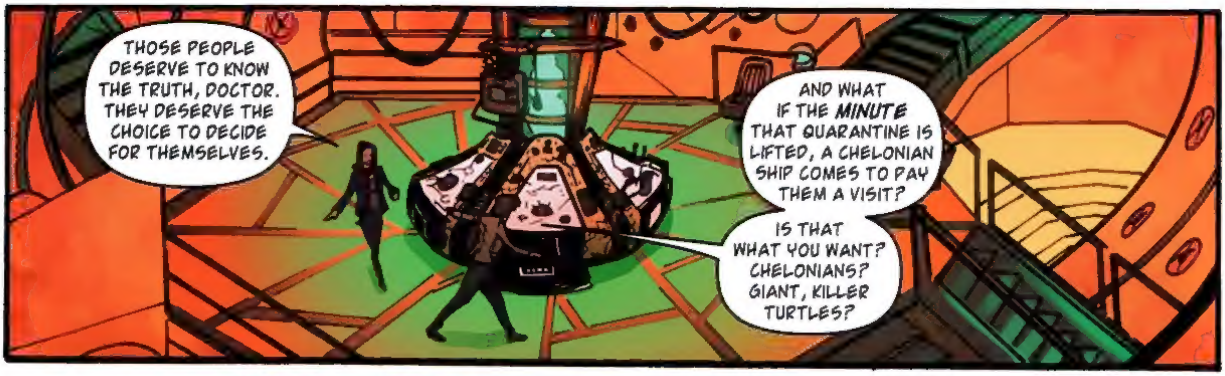
AMY! HOW ARE YOU FEELING? TARDIS MEDICAL BAY GET YOU ALL SORTED?
I'M FINE, I SUPPOSE. BIT OF A HEADACHE. IS THAT NORMAL?

COULD BE AN INDICATOR OF MILD BRAIN DAMAGE, BUT... OH, PROBABLY NOT.
SO... WHERE TO NEXT?
WHAT—WE'RE NOT JUST GOING TO LEAVE, ARE WE?

YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE LONG GOODBYES. CALLUM'S GOT EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL—HE'S A GOOD BLOKE.
BUT AREN'T YOU GOING TO GO CURE THE GREAT DEADLY DISEASE OUT THERE? TELL THEM HOW TO CONTACT THE OUTSIDE WORLD AND ALL THAT?

THE KING WAS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING, AMY. IT IS A DANGEROUS GALAXY, AND THOSE PEOPLE ARE SAFE FROM IT.
WHAT RIGHT DO I HAVE TO JUST OPEN UP THE DOORS TO THE REST OF HUMANITY AND SAY "BEST OF LUCK, MUST BE OFF"?

TRUST ME, AMY. THEY'RE FAR BETTER OFF AS THEY ARE.
NO. THEY'RE NOT.

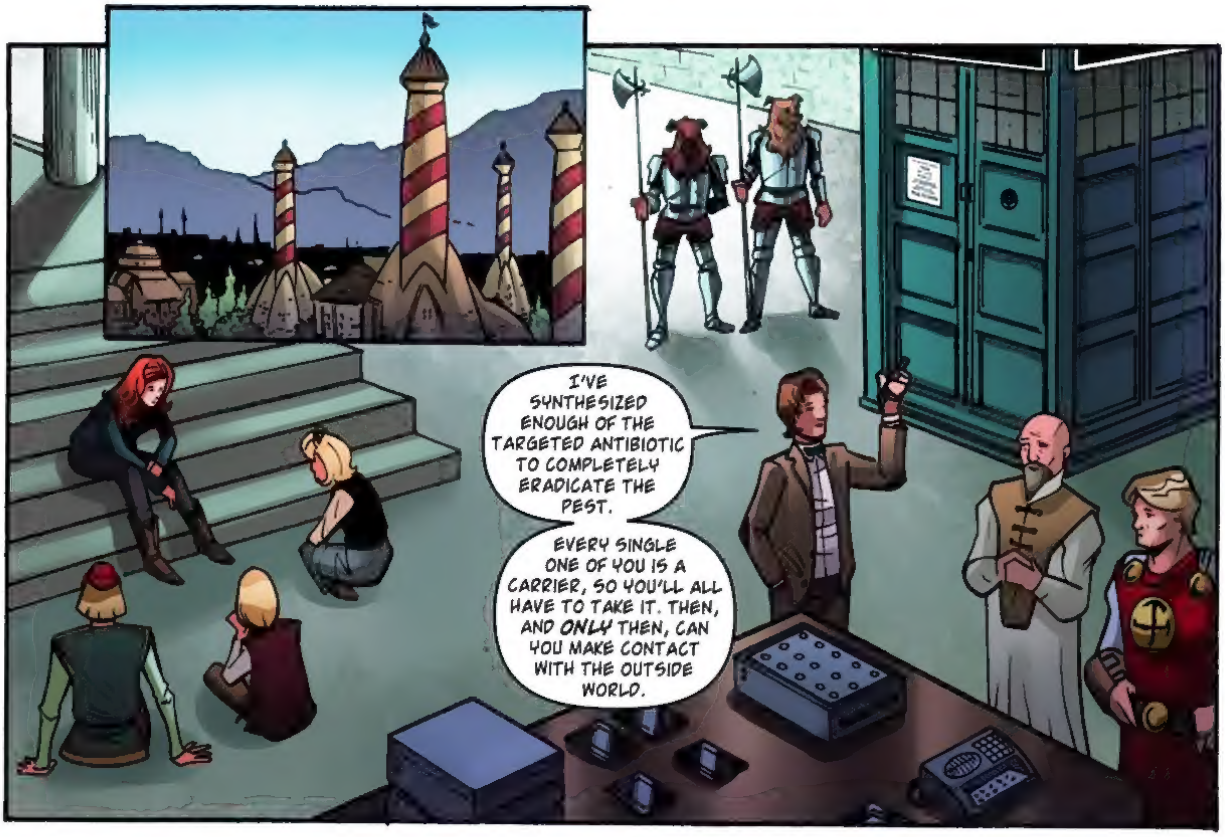

THOSE PEOPLE DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH, DOCTOR. THEY DESERVE THE CHOICE TO DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES.
AND WHAT IF THE MINUTE THAT QUARANTINE IS LIFTED, A CHELONIAN SHIP COMES TO PAY THEM A VISIT?
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT? CHELONIANS? GIANT, KILLER TURTLES?

THEN THEY'LL DEAL WITH IT AS BEST THEY CAN. BUT IT'S THEIR CHOICE. NOT YOURS.
YOU'RE ALWAYS GOING 'ROUND SAVING EVERYONE, BUT THEN YOU LEAVE AND THEY'VE GOT TO LOOK OUT FOR THEMSELVES.

THEY DESERVE TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN DESTINY. AND IF YOU JUST LET THEM GO ON WITH THIS... FAIRYTALE, THEN YOU'RE JUST AS BAD AS THAT KING.

I'M WHAT?
WELL, NOT AS BAD. HE'S ABSOLUTE RUBBISH. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

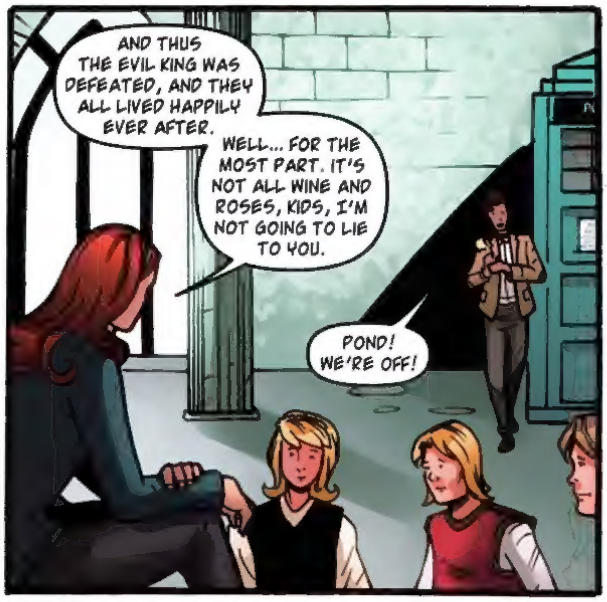
I KNOW IT'S HARD FOR YOU TO ADMIT, BUT YOU CAN'T PROTECT EVERYONE, EITHER.


I'VE SYNTHESIZED ENOUGH OF THE TARGETED ANTIBIOTIC TO COMPLETELY ERADICATE THE PEST.
EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU IS A CARRIER, SO YOU'LL ALL HAVE TO TAKE IT. THEN, AND ONLY THEN, CAN YOU MAKE CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

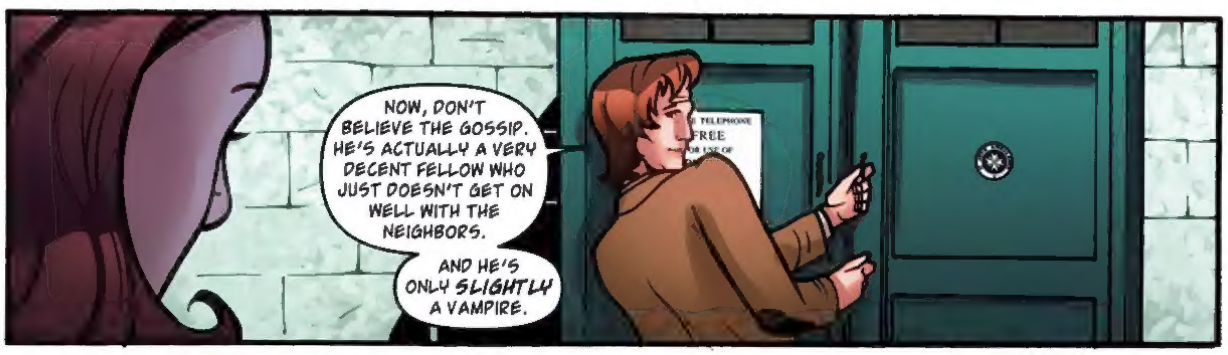
AND THESE CONTAIN ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO USE THIS COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE AND BEGIN REPAIRS ON THE SHIPS PARKED JUST THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DREAD TOWER.
POLICE BOX
THANK YOU, DOCTOR. THIS IS A STRANGE NEW WORLD WE'RE ENTERING INTO.

YES, BUT IT'S THE REAL ONE.
NOW LISTEN—IT'S A DANGEROUS, WAR-FILLED GALAXY OUT THERE RIGHT NOW. IT'S NOT A SAFE PLACE.
DOCTOR, I AM A KNIGHT. I WILL DO WHAT I MUST TO BRING ABOUT PEACE IN THESE WORLDS.

YOU KNOW WHAT, CALLUM? YOU JUST MIGHT AT THAT.
AND IF YOU'RE WISE, YOU'LL ENLIST GWYDION HERE TO HELP YOU. HE'S CLEVER, AND HE WAS ONLY EVER LOYAL TO WHAT HE BELIEVED IN.


AND THUS THE EVIL KING WAS DEFEATED, AND THEY ALL LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.
WELL... FOR THE MOST PART. IT'S NOT ALL WINE AND ROSES, KIDS, I'M NOT GOING TO LIE TO YOU.
POND! WE'RE OFF!

ALL RIGHT, AMY. WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GO MEET... DRACULA.
WHAT, THE REAL DRACULA? WITH THE CAPE AND THE FANGS AND THAT?


NOW, DON'T BELIEVE THE GOSSIP. HE'S ACTUALLY A VERY DECENT FELLOW WHO JUST DOESN'T GET ON WELL WITH THE NEIGHBORS.
AND HE'S ONLY SLIGHTLY A VAMPIRE.
TELEPHONE
FREE

WHAT DO YOU MEAN ONLY SLIGHTLY A VAMPIRE?
HOW IS ONE SLIGHTLY A VAMPIRE?

DOCTOR!
VWORP VWORP VWORP
POLICE BOX
POLICE BOX
AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER...